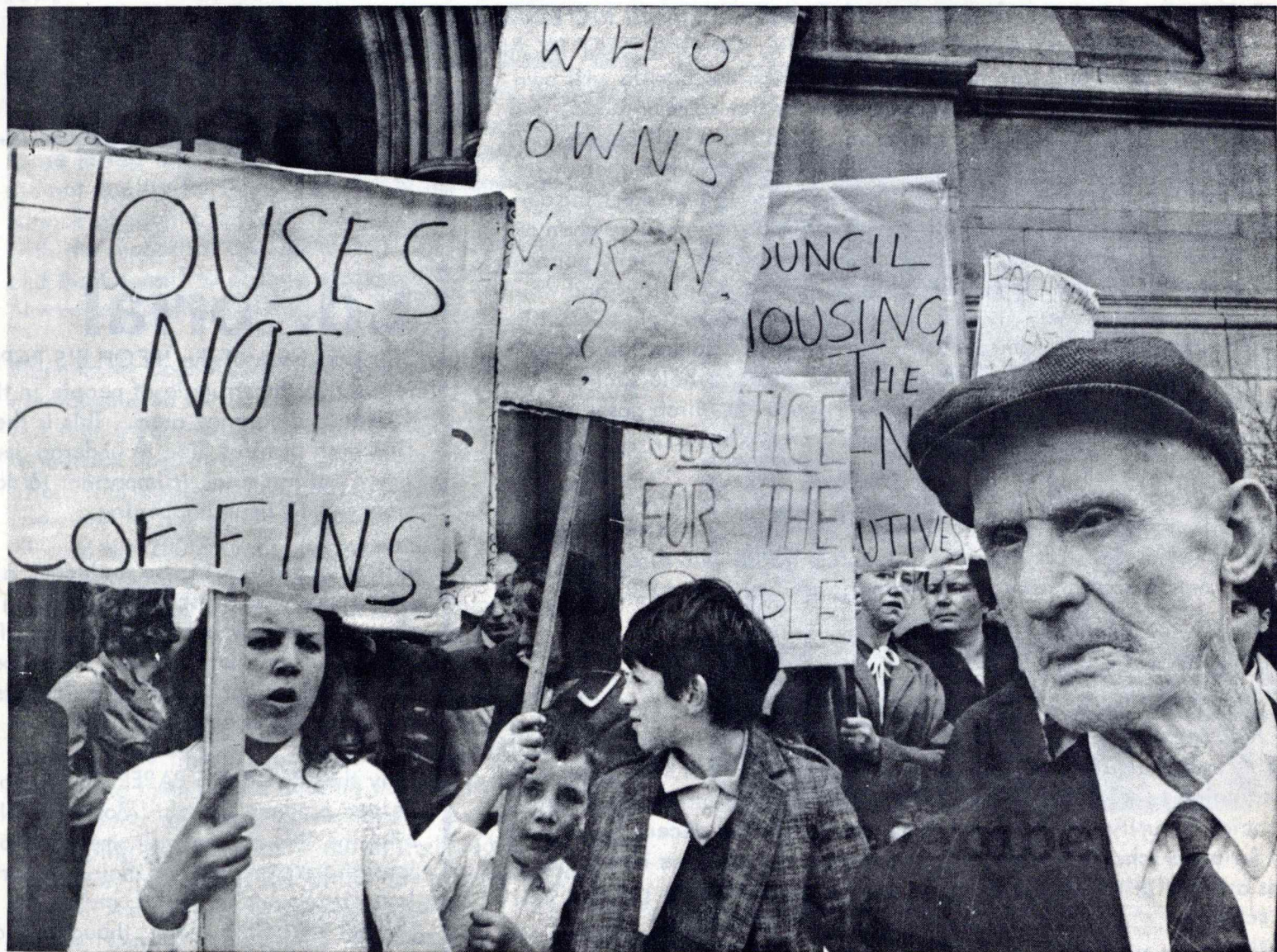


MOSS SIDE

MR FROW
November 1970

PEOPLES PAPER

9d



HOUSING VICTORY FOR MOSS SIDE TENANTS

OVER 100 FAMILIES AND SINGLE PEOPLE IN THE CARTER ST CLEARANCE AREA WHO GOT "EVICTION LETTERS" FROM MANCHESTER CORPORATION, WILL NOW RECEIVE COUNCIL HOUSE OFFERS.

Helped by the Moss Side Housing Union, these families managed to change Council policy after a 6 month struggle. The victory is claimed by the Union to be an important step in their fight for "FIT HOUSING FOR ALL". Over 1,000 more Moss Side families will now get rehoused as clearance continues.

(continued p.3)

VIEWPOINT

OF THE PEOPLES PAPER

WE SEEK A JUST WORLD.

WE LOOK TOWARDS THE DAY - WHEN THERE WILL BE NO RICH AND NO POOR, BUT EACH OF US THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WILL RECEIVE WHAT WE NEED TO LIVE IN ABUNDANCE AND PLENTY; AND THERE WILL BE NO ARMS RACE AND NO BOMB AND NO DOMINATION OF ONE COUNTRY BY ANOTHER COUNTRY, OR ONE RACE BY ANOTHER RACE, WHEN there will be good and free housing for all; when the people will own the industries and all share in running them for the common good, and deadening work is reduced to a minimum, when there will be adequate, good and free medical services throughout the world; when there will be welfare services which will really take care of the weakest in society, and all the people will help in this welfare and caring; when sex stops being sick, and hung-up, and machine-like, but instead becomes natural and full of feeling for the other person, and healthy; and when men and women have equality, in creative work, in sex, in everything in life; when profit-seeking industrialists no longer poison the air with factory fumes and the water with chemicals, or con whole societies into using transport (cars, lorries, buses particularly) which gases and slaughters us and wastes the precious space of our planet.

We are, in other words, socialists. We seek the overthrow and abolition of all capitalists (those who own and run industry and make their riches out of us daily) and chief bureaucrats (those who direct the government departments, town halls and nationalized industries).

WE SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE.

This is the future we look towards and believe in. But today, now, we must fight for real improvements in people's conditions - for a real living wage for all of us, regardless of skill, and for a beginning to workers' control of the factories and industries; for higher Social Security and Insurance benefits for all; for decent housing for all; for more schools and equipment and suitable teachers in working-class areas with the beginnings of a pupil/parent/teacher running of the schools.

Fight we must, for the people have never gained anything in this society except by fighting for it. Together with many of the rest of the people this is what we are doing - fighting against the Enemy, the capitalist, the bureaucrat, the exploiter, to seize from him real improvement in people's conditions - NOW.

WE WILL REPORT THE TRUTH.

In this paper we will be reporting these fights and discussing this kind of future. And we will report the truth of these struggles, as far as is within our power, unlike the big newspapers we read every day. They are owned and run by the very people against whom the fight is more and more directed, and their function is to make profit for these people. Their "news" is aimed to cover up the real truth of these struggles for better conditions and to suppress in us any hope that our society could be just, equal and really democratic.

We speak from first-hand experience of how the "Manchester Evening News" has constantly twisted the facts of the Housing Union's struggle and the true situation of housing in Manchester. In the "People's Paper" we will report the truth, because in the end it is only the truth that can free us.

Editorial

This first issue of the 'PEOPLE'S PAPER' reports on the struggle of people in the Carter St clearance area. This is the first area of Moss Side to undergo demolition and we think it important to document what's been happening.

Other local news is also included, along with reports on Manchester's housing shortage and a local firm's support of racism in southern Africa. We hope to extend this wider reporting in later issues and bring out a city-wide edition.

Why the 'PEOPLE'S PAPER'? Most of us helped produce the old 'Moss Side News'. Like the 'News' we welcome contributions and comments, and mainly report local issues and struggles; unlike the 'News' we hold a clear, though not dogmatic, socialist viewpoint. For us a paper can only be a people's paper if it is committed to reporting the fight to win the wealth and resources of the country from the huge companies and rich families into the hands of the people, that it can be controlled directly by the people for the ends of justice and equality.

The paper is non-profitmaking, but can survive if it pays its own way. So we need your help and support. We hope to bring it out every 6 weeks or so.

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Victory for Moss Side

(cont)

Last June about 90 families and 100 single people, some of them old age pensioners, were the shocked recipients of "eviction letters" from the Housing Department. These letters asked them to vacate the property as they did not qualify for rehousing. Only the courageous resistance of people to these Town Hall eviction threats, with the support of the Carter St Housing Union, has forced the Council to change clearance policy at its 4th November Council meeting.

Manchester Council will now rehouse all people in a clearance area by the time of the Public Enquiry (that's less than a year before clearance begins). This new regulation does away with pernicious rehousing qualifications that discriminated heavily against room-dwellers (they had to live about 3 years in the area to qualify). Most of the 200 households under the eviction hammer will now get a council house or flat. The Council has gone a long way towards meeting the Union's demand for "rehousing for all" from clearance areas.

The Union, now expanded into the Moss Side Housing Union, gained this victory after a long and sustained struggle. By fighting for "eviction" families one by one, by getting them on the housing waiting list (for which only 2 years residence in Manchester is required), and by helping them to stick it out in their rooms and houses until they got offers, the Union had already helped some of the families to get council offers. This pressure on the Housing Department, together with two militant protests at the Town Hall, brought the change.

SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE WILL NOW BE REHOUSED FROM MOSS SIDE, AS CLEARANCE CONTINUES, WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN FORCED TO 'MOVE ON' BEFORE.

Not only will many families in acute housing need now get council offers, but there will be less over crowding in later Moss Side clearance areas, and elsewhere, as a result.

It is an important victory for all the people of Moss Side and the rest of Manchester's slum clearance areas. However, members of the Moss Side Housing Union say the victory is only a first step. The Union will not be satisfied until not only everyone is rehoused from clearance areas, but every person in Manchester lives in fit and uncrowded accommodation.



NO LONGER IN FEAR OF EVICTION.

A young mother with two little boys, unqualified to go on the waiting list. She gets rehoused now the qualifications have changed. "I think it's smashing", she said. "I don't want to go in any more rooms."

DIARY OF THE FIGHT

JUNE

JUNE 2nd.

PETITION AGAINST TOWN HALL'S "INVASION OF PRIVACY". A 236-signatured petition was presented to the Housing Manager. It protested about the "invasion of privacy" by Housing Inspectors who asked questions about rent arrears and wages, and often inspected the house. The petition demanded an assurance that no grading system was being applied. The delegation got little satisfaction.

LATE JUNE.

ONE IN THREE RESIDENTS GET "EVICTION LETTER". About 90 families and 100 single people got a letter from the Housing Dept. requesting that they "vacate these premises after service of Notice of Entry", as they did not qualify for rehousing.

CARTER ST. AREA HOUSING UNION FIGHTS FOR REHOUSING OF ALL. The Union was started, demanding the rehousing of all in housing need; an end to all grading; a fair choice for everyone; a site-office to deal with all the problems of clearance. Regular meetings were held at 4, Carter Terrace.

Families got eviction letters

● Mr and Mrs M and their two live in 1 damp paying £2.10s it.

● Mr. and Mrs. D have lived in the same house for almost 3 years. They and their 2 children sleep, eat and live all together in one room, tramping up and down stairs for every drop of water they need. Their rent is £2.12s.6d., and for this they get mice, bedbugs and the occasional gas leak thrown in. Mrs. D's new baby, born in this room, was recently in hospital with an illness caused by the condition of the toilet. A Health Inspector has declared the toilet unfit, and although it has been cleared by the Cleansing Dept., the Inspector says it will fill up again. The Landlady will do nothing. The Town Hall visitor called early this year. "We got a letter in June, telling us we weren't qualified because we haven't been here 3 years."



They've lived in Manchester 9 years but have moved between Moss Side and Old Trafford - a 1 mile apart, but across borough boundaries. "You don't qualify", said a housing official. But with Union support they stick on for a council flat.

THE MOORE FAMILY - WILL THEY REHOUSE -

"They don't come", says Mrs. D, "you'd think when you've filled in all the forms and told them where you've lived and where you want to go, it would count for something, but you get nothing." The family tried to get a council place. They feel they can manage on their own. Mr. D says "The Corporation fears nothing. If they say we're not qualified, there's nothing anyone can do." They did try to get rooms but "nobody wants you with children". So they stay, cramped into their small room, their health in danger. "If you live like rats, they'll treat you like rats", says Mr. D.

● For 2½ years Mr. and Mrs. X and their three boys have lived in two rooms for which they pay £3 a week. Mr. X and the oldest son, who both suffer badly from bronchitis, sleep in the living room, the bedroom is too damp. Indeed, the health of all the family is poor because of the conditions - cracked walls and ceiling, a hole in the roof, rain pouring in. The landlady does nothing.

Before, they had a council house in Hattersley. Mr. X is on Social Security. Whilst there, they found the money so tight it was a case of "pay the rent and starve." They got into arrears and "no one seemed to want to help", so they left, forced again into rooms in Moss Side.

-- Contd. on next page

DIARY OF THE FIGHT

JULY

- JULY 1st.** UNION MEMBERS INVADE HOUSING DEPARTMENT. Sir Richard Harper, Housing Chairman, refused to see members who had got the "eviction letter". So Union members stamped into room M19 at the Housing Dept. and demanded an explanation. Under fire, the chief lettings officer gave waiting list forms to the families under the eviction threat, and said he would do his best to rehouse them. Since then some 40 households have been reconsidered in this way.
- JULY 9th.** LABOUR PARTY PROMISES "NO EVICTIONS". Mrs Winnie Smith, Labour leader on the Housing Committee, and former Housing Chairman, said at a Union public meeting that nobody had or would be evicted from a clearance area - "the Council is proud of that" she said. But she stood by the qualifying rules - she had introduced them!
- JULY 29th.** UNION PROTESTS AT COUNCIL MEETING. A Housing official angrily said "we may be forced to evict people", when she was questioned on her refusal to rehouse a near-homeless family who had moved out of Carter St at the time of the "eviction letter". So 40 Union members picketed the Council meeting, demanding an end to eviction threats and the rehousing of all in need, and blaming Council policy for the evils of Rachman landlords and overcrowding.
- At that meeting the Council decided to stop overspill developments and slow down council house building, as they said there would be a "glut" of council houses by 1974 if they didn't. Union members, angry at this two-faced policy - that reckoned the housing shortage was nearly solved, yet tried to evict people onto the streets - shouted "Shame" from the public gallery and threw down leaflets. The police then "evicted" 30 members from the gallery.

Six months ago they got an eviction letter. So Mrs. X went to the Housing Dept with the Union and was told that, although she had lived in Manchester all her life, before she could even go on the waiting list the arrears must be paid. Two more trips with the Union produced the same answer, although the debt was reduced - to £25.

And now? They're still not sure what will happen. They're determined to stick it out, to test whether the Corporation will put people on the streets. But whatever happens, of one thing they are sure, as Mr. X says, "The Town Hall don't care about your future."

The X's have to live on a breadline income, they need at least £30 a week. They are forced to live in disgraceful conditions, pushed about by an exploiting landlady.

No department in our 'Welfare State' will make sure the X's are properly rehoused and treated like human beings. The arrears must be paid, the rules can't be broken, the X's can't pay, so who will?

Rehousing qualifications

- OLD:
1. Any occupier of a whole house who entered it before the area was declared a clearance area. (March '68 in Carter St.)
 2. Any occupier of a whole house who entered it before the local Public Enquiry (Nov. '69 in Carter St) and has resided in Manchester for 2 years.
 3. Any family, or single person over 60, living in rooms who has been in residence in the area since it was represented. (Nov. '67 in Carter St)
 4. Any person resident in the area not qualifying under categories 1-3 will only be rehoused if they qualify on the housing waiting list (this means at least 2 years residence in Manchester even for families while single people may not qualify after a lifetime.)

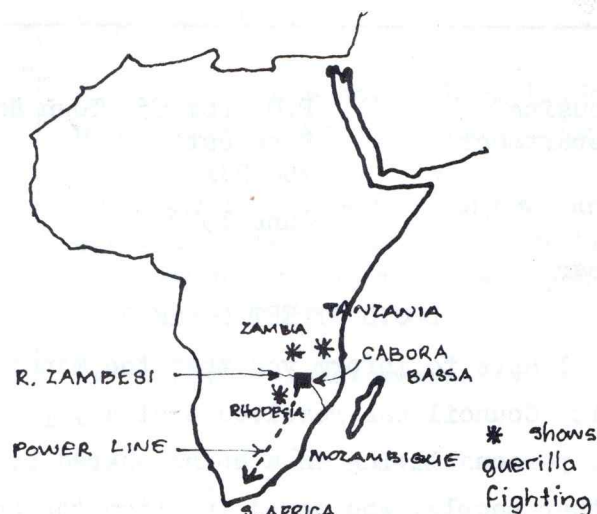
NEW: 1. All persons resident in houses in a clearance area at the date of the Public Enquiry shall be eligible for rehousing whether or not they have the residential qualifications (that is 2 years residence in Manchester.)

2. Any person entering a house in a clearance area after the date of the Public Enquiry to be rehoused in accordance with his position on the housing waiting list.

ANCLIFF EXPLOIT BRITISH & AFRICAN WORKERS

Have you ever seen the Ancliff tankers down at the Scottish & Newcastle Brewery on Denmark Road? Ancliff (BLT) Ltd. is a heavy transport firm with its depot at Bulk Road, Urmston. Its parent company is United Transport, an international combine with companies in Britain and other firms on the Continent, in Australia, Jamaica, Canada and many African countries. It's before tax profit in 1969 was over £5m.

Together with Barclays Bank, United Transport is helping build a massive dam on the Zambezi river, at Cabora Bassa in Portugese-held Mozambique. Portugal's idea is to encourage the rich and powerful of Britain, France and Germany and South Africa to set up industries in Mozambique and halt the efforts of the African people in fighting for freedom. At the same time, they want to supply electricity to South Africa and boost Rhodesian trade,



FRELIMO, the liberation movement which is fighting 60,000 Portugese troops to free the African people from their near-slavery and incredible poverty, has freed much of the north of the country and has said it will try and stop the dam being built. It is men like J.H. Watts and D.L. Jones (president and chairman of United Transport) and their shareholders who extract their profits from British workers and are now trying to enrich themselves by keeping the Mozambique people in near-slavery. British workers, let us unite with our African brothers and do all in our power to

BUST THE DAM.

Fight till you're satisfied

says Mrs Maureen Moonsamy of
in the struggle to get
everyone re-housed.



I hope my story will help you. I was waiting for clearance for three years. I never felt more exploited in my life. At the end we were living in muck and squalor. The Corporation wanted the premises and their surveyors were in and out of the house investigating. Information that I and others required was not available. We were left in doubt as to whether or not we'd get rehoused at all, whether we'd get any choice, or any help with removal expenses, and we didn't know until the latter end of the three years about well maintainance. It was four months before the bulldozers that the Corporation produced the blue book, giving information needed three years earlier, and then only a few were given it.

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Housing
Department

P.O. Box 531 Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2JX

June 1970

Dear

LLOYD STREET NORTH

I have to inform you that the Manchester City Council has resolved that any person or persons living in a house shared by other people, who moved in after the house was represented to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, shall not be offered alternative accommodation.

As you moved into the above premises after 6.11.67 you do not qualify for rehousing, and I must, therefore, request that you vacate these premises as soon as possible after service of Notice of Entry.

Yours faithfully,

L. BAUMBER

Housing Manager.

Rehousing is justice

• NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ROOM-DWELLERS.

Under the old rehousing policy the council was blatantly discriminating against people living in rooms. This direct discrimination against the very families who live in the worst conditions and bare the brunt of the housing shartage was totally unjust.

• NO EVICTION THREATS IN CLEARANCE AREAS.

The Council has no right to demolish the homes of its citizens without making sure the people are adequately rehoused - even the Government sponsored "Culling-

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The horriblest thing of all was when an eviction letter was sent to a widow with 10 kids. She knew nobody, she didn't know where to go or what to do. She was heart-broke. She met a friend of mine in the street who sent her to the Union. We soon found many others with such letters - single people and more families - it did not matter to the Corporation. Many joined the Union and together we went to the Housing Dept with them, demonstrated against the Council's policy and saw the Housing Committee Chairman, Sir Richard Harper. We have won part of our fight. Now if you are in lodgings or in a whole house before the Public Inquiry, you will be rehoused. But there is still a fight - for no evictions after that. Harper said that Manchester has never evicted and never will. I say, if you're not evicted you will get offered accommodation no-one else wants, and get no choice. So get together,

terrace, leader

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Carter St area under their Union, has made the city Council begin to see reason. The new rehousing qualifications stops any blatant discrimination against room-dwellers and draws the line less than a year before clearance. This is a great improvement, but any residential qualification leads to more suffering for those already in the worst situation and means the Council will continue to threaten eviction.

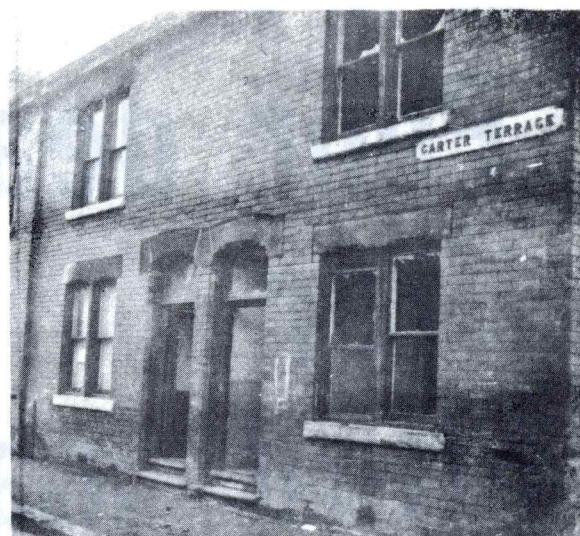
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REHOUSE ALL UP TO THE BULLDOZER.

Rachman landlords are still letting rooms to new tenants in Carter St area, though it's been illegal since 12th October. The Council has a responsibility to re-house these last-minute tenants - nobody could be living in worse conditions, and it's the Town Hall to blame for allowing such a scandalous example of the housing shortage and Rachman-type exploitation to occur. If the Council became the responsible landlord of housing it has bought up to demolish, locked up rooms and blocked up houses as people got rehoused from them, this situation would never arise in the first place.



union office, 4 carter terrace ~ mrs moonsamy's old home

tell the Housing Dept it is not good enough and fight till you're satisfied.

In the clearance area there are always some people who begrudge others being rehoused at all. People who have lived there for a long time, for instance. I can understand this, but I say they will get rehoused, and get their choice of area and type of house, like I have done. But they can still fight for others.

The Union was formed by ordinary working people like myself, students and so on. It takes people like you and them to fight for a better rehousing programme, better country, better world. We must fight together as a Union of people. In this paper are the addresses of where to find the Union, where to go for help.

By the way, the widow with the 10 kids is now rehoused out of muck and squalor.

Try and think of others. What they haven't got today, you may not have in the future. What you haven't suffered today, you might suffer in the future.

AN EMPTY ROOM - WHY?

An old lady of 71, who was 10 years in a furnished room, moved to this 1-bedroomed flat in Hulme. The Corporation supply the stove and take the rent of £3.12s.8d. They want to know no more. She is the sufferer, alone in the empty flat.

I blame Moss Side Welfare Dept, but not them alone; the Housing Dept and the Social Security for not co-ordinating a better system of clearance. The Union had to lend her a mattress to lie on and blankets for the windows. She was like this for 14 days, and to my knowledge there are more like her in Hulme now.

THIS IS YOUR WELFARE STATE.

Poor deal for blind man

Alone in a damp, draughty, tumbling down room lives a blind man, 65 years old. All the back windows are out of the house, and pigeons infesting the roof disturb his sleep. Over the years he has learned to find his way safely around, but because of the clearance, walking out is now full of dangers for him. He is scared of falling over the flags and bricks that litter the streets and the other day nearly fell into one of the open coal holes on Greenheys Lane. A visitor from the Housing Department called, but because he has lived at his present address only 16 months, he got an eviction letter.

When he got the letter he thought of going to the Welfare or Blind Aid, but travelling is difficult, and anyway he had found them unhelpful before. He felt "they wanted to get shut of me". He gets his dinners from the Welfare, but no-one mentioned housing to him. He had almost given up hope of Council housing when the Housing Union called and pushed the Town Hall to put him on the waiting list. Now he is being offered a third floor flat in Ancoats. He is glad to be going there but really wants ground floor accommodation because of his blindness. He can get no promise from the Town Hall of a transfer - "It's not our job", they say. Mr. S wants to move immediately. He has lived in Manchester all his life, but after losing his home in the blitz, he has always been "knocked about in rooms", as he puts it.

"There's nothing worse than living in rooms", he says. "It's not healthy, it's dirty. I want to be comfortable, keep things where I know where they are. Have somewhere of my own. The Council should fix everybody up".



- MRS MARGAI AND HER HUSBAND WERE ALMOST FORGOTTEN. They live in a flat above a garage that isn't being demolished, even though it's in the clearance area. They are now getting council offers on medical grounds, as she is an epileptic. As they are only being considered on the waiting list they've not yet been offered a place in Hulme, where they want to go. They stick it out, but Mrs. Margai isn't very well under the worry of it all.

- Mr. and Mrs. Yates to be rehoused at last! The Town Hall lost their medical certificate for eight months. Mr. Yates and their 11-year-old daughter have chronic bronchitis. After getting an eviction letter, they might have moved to more damp rooms if they had not been so determined to fight with the Union for their right to decent housing.

DIARY OF THE FIGHT :

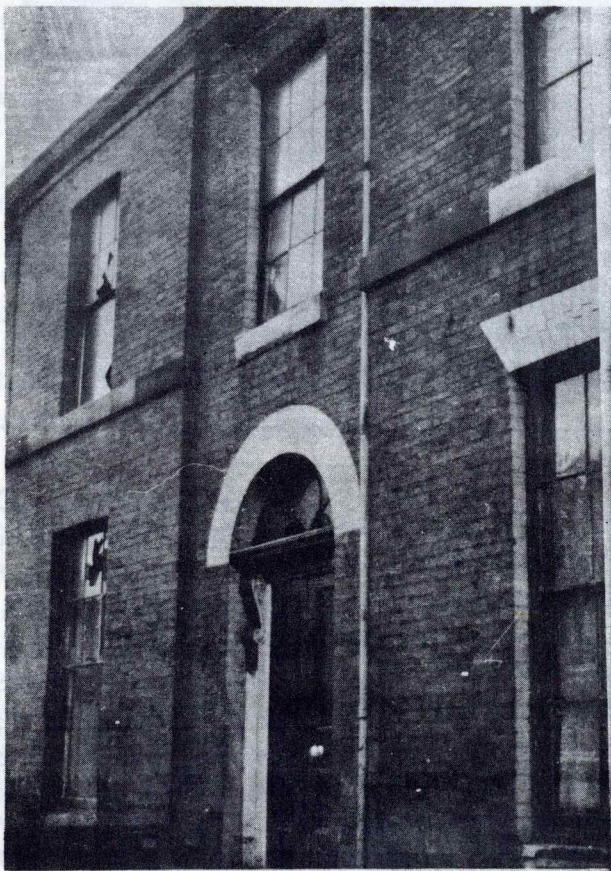
SEPT.

SEPTEMBER 2nd. THE PRESS REPORTS 200 UNDER EVICTION THREAT. The Union got the 'Guardian newspaper to report the scandle of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the households in the Carter St Area receiving "eviction letters". The Housing Dept. then said there will be change; Sir Richard said there would not - confusion in the Town Hall!

SEPTEMBER 14th. UNION PICKETS HOUSING COMMITTEE. As a result of Union pressure the Housing Committee was to reconsider rehousing qualifications. 40 Union members handed councillors and officials a Statement. The committee failed to agree among itself. Afterwards Sir Richard called Union members liars for presenting the facts about discrimination and the "eviction letter" and stubbornly denied there was any problem. But he did state: "there will be no evictions". The committee's Vice-Chairman, more reasonable, agreed there must be change.

MANCHESTER'S RACHMAN EXPOSED!

Often when demolition comes - so do the rats. But some rats have been around Moss Side too long already - the landlords who squeeze their tenants dry to the last drop and the Corporation who let them get away with it.



One such landlady, Mrs. Derbyshire, runs a large number of houses, including 15 in Lloyd Street. She pays £2 a week each to an estate agent on condition that she does the repairs. But she lets them again as rooms, charging as much as £4 to a family living in a damp and poorly furnished room. At least £11 is collected from one house alone, leaving £9 clear profit, as repairs are virtually unheard of.

Tenants do not have rent books, which is illegal, live in unhealthy and dangerous conditions. There are convincing rumours of illegale evictions and harrassment, and recently, veiled threats of violence were made to a Moss Side Housing Union official. Has the law any meaning at all?

Part of her policy is to establish "friendly" relations with her tenants, getting them to clean communal parts of the house in one case, and getting one tenant to let another use her cooker, so saving herself the cost of cleaning and proper cooking facilities.

With the demolition of much of the property, Mrs Derbyshire is perhaps beginning to feel the pinch. Her latest 'crime' is the exploitation of tenants up to the very last minute - "You'll pay rent until the bricks are falling", is her reply to tenants who ask for rents to be reduced now that the Corporation has taken over the property.

The Town Hall turns a blind eye. Mrs. Derbyshire tears down, or describes as 'unimportant', notices of entry. She has let at least 3 rooms to new tenants since October 13th. Where is the Corporation? Blind again.

When the houses are demolished, these tenants will probably be forced to accept her 'kindly' offer of accommodation somewhere else, where their exploitation and her profits will continue.

It serves the Town Hall well to ignore landladies like Mrs. Derbyshire. The Council cannot put a stop to Rachman practises without providing fit houses for all.

WHO IS THE REAL VILLIAN?

The corrupt landlord who bleeds his tenant dry? Or the Mighty City Council who looks on and lets him do it?

OCT.

OBER 12th. THE UNION MANS A 24-HOUR SITE OFFICE Clearance began. The Union started a self-help scheme for repairs, tenant protection against harrassment, support for those sticking it out for a Council offer, etc. 4 Carter Terrace was re-occupied so there could be a Union Office till the last person is rehoused.

EMBER 4th. A PEOPLE'S VICTORY WON BY UNION. Council changes rehousing policy after six month struggle.

The fight continues — —

'We stick' says Eric

My wife and I was born in Manchester where we lived for 22 years, before we moved to Yorkshire. In 1970 we came back with our three children.

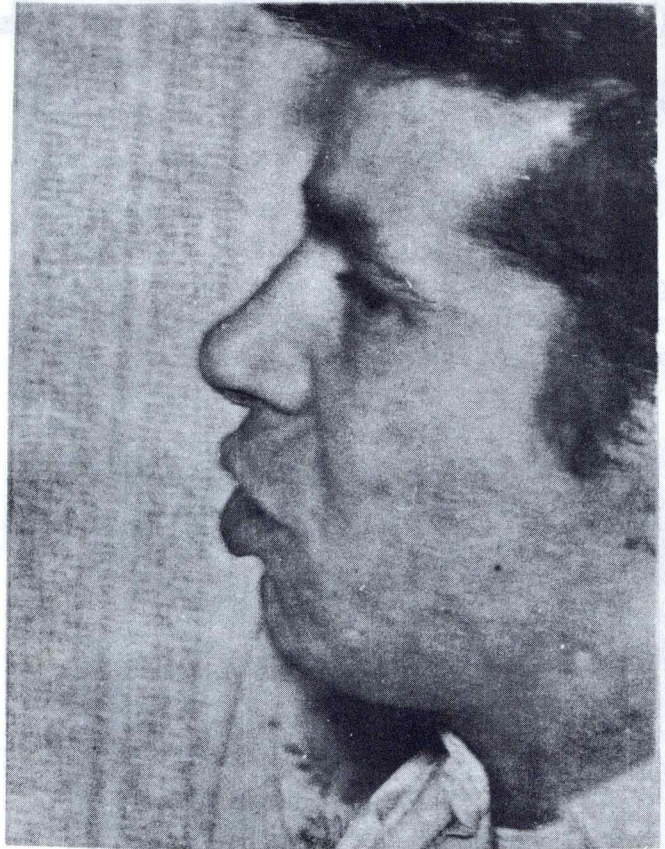
The end of August we got our rooms in Carter St., and we went to put our names on the housing list, but was told it would be 2 years before we would be considered for re-housing.

On Oct.5, I again went to the Town Hall and on this occasion, I was with members of the Carter St. Union. I am (myself) a member. I was told I would have to move, the house was due to come down.

Now if we do move, it will have to be to another slum clearance area, then in a few months time I will asked to move again. Well, my family and I are determined to stay and fight the Council to the last.

There are more families in Greenkeys willing to do the same, if we all stick together we stand a good chance of winning.

I remain yours,
ERIC COOPER.



CLEARANCE MESS — SITE OFFICE NEEDED

Two old ladies have been left for months in houses where the rain pours in through leaking roofs - the lead has been taken. And this is only one of the trials suffered by people in the Carter St clearance area.

One block of houses was without water for two weeks because a landlady turned off the supply. Landlords who've done no repairs for months or even years, still charge full rents after the Council took over the property. Furnished tenants find their gas and electricity cut off, and their landlords threaten to remove the furniture.

Unblocked houses have led to constant fires and the injury of kids. People have trooped down to the Housing Dept six or more times to find out about their offer; several have spent hours wandering from one Town Hall room to another in an attempt to solve clearance problems. The Corporation give the demolition contractors the numbers of houses ready to demolish that still have occupants - fortunately they refuse to be the Council's eviction baliff.

Social Security keep deducting rent payments when the tenant is still having to pay it. Several families and old people have lived

furniture at all, while Social Security and Welfare hassle about who provides some.

In the middle of this worry and chaos, tenants are told next to nothing by the Town Hall about their rights or what's happening.

Only a Council Site Office in Moss Side, say at the old library, can begin to sort out the mess and misery of clearance. But the Council must also become the real landlord when it buy up the property - providing furniture, essential repairs and some security to tenants.

Moss Side Housing Union continues the fight

The Carter St Union has now expanded into the Moss Side Union committed to fight for:

1. Rehousing for everyone in clearance areas up to the bulldozers.
2. The Council to take full responsibility for the welfare needs of clearance, basic house repairs and maintenance of services during clearance.
3. Rehousing now for everyone in the worst and most overcrowded conditions.
4. A speeding up of council housebuilding, most of it within the city.

BRANCH OFFICES:

Carter St Area Richard Bartholomew, 4 Carter Terrace
Monton St Area Jim Holden, 76 Darcy St.
Sewerby St Area Heather Leach, 53 Sewerby St.

Housing shortage a scandal, says union

MANCHESTER CORPORATION ADMIT IT WILL TAKE ANOTHER 8 YEARS TO REHOUSE THE 100,000 PEOPLE STILL LIVING IN UNFIT DWELLINGS IN THE CITY. Yet this summer they stopped overspill and cut back on Council house building as they claimed a glut of council housing by 1974. The result of this scandal, claims Moss Side Housing Union Official MR. ROGER JACKSON, will be 10's of thousands still remaining in overcrowded and substandard housing into the 80's. Only a doubling of Council house building could begin to solve this social disgrace.

HOUSE BUILDING CUT.

Overspill building was cut back and sites for 4,000 houses were cancelled by Manchester Council on 29th July. They claimed there would be a glut of council houses and flats by '74 and at least 22,000 would stand empty in 1980 if the present house building programme continued. Reasons given for this slow down were the number of relets coming vacant (3,000 a year) and more people in clearance areas finding private accommodation. What the Council didn't say was that it would be another 8 years before they planned to clear all the houses they consider still to be unfit; that they had no idea of the number of people in overcrowding needing fit housing; that most people rehousing themselves from clearance areas were being refused council accommodation or that some of the vacant relets would be classed as unfit if the Council applied their rules to them.

UNFIT HOUSES NOT CLEARED.

The Council plan to take another 8 years to clear the remaining 38,000 slum houses and rehouse their 100,000 occupants. Together with another 50,000 people they expect to house from the waiting list, that's a quarter of Manchester's population. This might sound a mammoth task about which the Town Hall deserves to boast, but there could and should have been fit and uncramped accommodation for everyone years ago.

OLD TENAMENTS REMAIN.

About 62,000 houses built before 1916 are not included in this clearance programme. How many of these are unfit? How many council tenaments and flats built like prison blocks in the 20's and early 30's should be condemned?

Many people have been forced by the housing shortage to continually move around and so never qualify because of the 2 year residence clause? And how many have to live in the large deteriorating overcrowded houses in Whalley Range or Victoria Park, to suffer exploitation from Rachman landlords without any hope of being rehoused through clearance?

HOUSING MONEY LINES ALDERMEN'S POCKETS

Manchester Council is not trying to solve the

housing shortage, or get fit housing for all - the people's money is being used for the ends of the rich, i.e. the owners of property. Inner city land has been offered for expensive private housing; luxury town flats for businessmen (exploiters) is planned by the Council; the University devours land along Oxford Rd and kicks thousands of families out of the city; £30million of our money has gone for a shopping and office centre on Market Street (for whose benefit?); loans amounting to £4½ million have been given by the Council to Housing Associations, which build expensive suburban houses (£13 rents in some!) and get £148 subsidies yearly per house interesting that Alderman Sir Richard Harper (Tory) and Fieldhouse (Tory) hold lucrative directorships on as many as 9 such Associations, and Fieldhouse is chairman of a firm which has built many of the houses.

TORIES PLAN HOUSING SHORTAGE

Now the Tory government has moved into this "game" of pretending to solve the housing shortage. They talk of saving £200 million on house spending, while claiming to start a massive system of rent rebates for the poor in private as well as Council tenancies and solving the slum problem. Something will have to give - and it isn't meant to be those rebates which will line landlords pockets but give tenants no better conditions. They will try to force Council rents sky-high and slow down council house-building even further. Already they've refused a £380,000 loan for a public hall in the new Moss Side District Centre.

PEOPLE'S FIGHT FOR FIT HOUSING.

Over 100,000 of us wait in damp or overcrowded homes. Why? Why in the space age must people in Moss Side wait 2,3,4 or more years before getting better conditions? Why must many Manchester people wait even longer - a child's primary school life, or more. Why?

We must fight now for a great increase in council house building, a doubling of the number built a year, and for more built within the city. The present housing programme should be completed in 4, not 8 years. Why wait, while the Enemy lives in large houses and mansions, and laughs?

LOCAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Claimants Union fights

Mrs. Close - homeless six weeks, forced to put children into care. Last week found a flat and asked Children's Dept for children back; told she could have them Saturday 7th November.

Mon. 2nd. Went to Roby St Social Security - told to leave and never return or she would be prosecuted for fraud.

Tues. 3rd. Contacted Claimants Union.

Wed. 4th. Went to Roby St with representative of Claimants Union. Told that as children in care she was a single woman - "go and find employment". Claimants Union contacted Regional Office - told that she didn't need to find work and was entitled to claim. On second visit to Roby St told that money would be posted and visitor would come next day.

Thurs. 5th. Mrs. Close waited all day with C. U. representative. No money or visitor arrived. Mrs. Close phoned Roby St - told that visitor called and no-one at home.

Fri. 6th. £7.5s. came, leaving £2.5s. after rent had been paid. Visitor came before C. U. representative arrived, and told Mrs. Close that without children present, would not get grant for household equipment, of which she had none.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON: Claimants Union phoned Regional Office who said that Mrs. Close was entitled to grant and more money - they had been told by visitor that Mrs. Close had threatened her with a knife. (She doesn't possess one). After pressure from the Claimants Union, she will get full week's money, plus £20 towards bedding on Saturday.

Sat. 7th. Mrs. Close gets her £35 giro - a victory for the Claimants Union, but why should it have happened at all?

Whatever happened to the Housing Action Group ?

H.A.G. broke up after the council elections in May. The reasons for this are complicated, but mainly caused by disagreements in policy. Some of us formed the Housing Union and the people's paper and another group has very recently formed a Housing Association within the Moss Side People's Association.



Too superior for a market ?

There is a rumour going around about Sister Superior of Loretto College and the Market Traders. Apparently, the market men have been offered a temporary site near the college, and the headmistress objects. She feels it may distract the girls. We hope the Corporation will remember that a market is needed by Moss Side People. Instead of locking her girls behind high walls, the Sister Superior should involve the school in the community to which it belongs.

THINGS GOING ON

*PLAYGROUP - 2 to 5-year-olds. Hideaway Youth Club, corner Stockton St and Moss Lane. Run by local mothers - NEEDS EQUIPMENT. OPEN - Weekdays... 9.30 - 11.30 am.
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*PLAYGROUP - 2 to 5-year-olds. Alex Park Cafe. Mothers must stay with children. Run by Parks Dept. OPEN - Mon. Wed. Fri. 1.30 - 4.00 pm
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*ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND - Darncombe St. Supervised. Playleader. OPEN - Daily 4.30 - 8.00 pm. Sat. & Sun. .10.00 - 8.00 pm.
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*CLAIMANTS UNION - for Social Security Claimants. Contact: 43 Sewerby Street. Tel.: 226-1946.

Join the Union and fight for your rights.
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